

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A caster shipping assembly comprising the following:
2 a wheel having a radius and a centrally mounted axle; and
3 a securing bracket connected to the wheel and being movable between a
4 shipping position in which the bracket is fastened to a packaging
5 component and the wheel is suspended above the packaging
6 component, and an in-use position in which the wheel is free for rolling
7 contact with a support surface.

- 1 2. A caster shipping assembly in accordance with claim 1, wherein
2 the securing bracket comprises the following:
3 a pair of side supports secured to opposing sides of the axle, each of the side
4 brackets having a length greater than the radius of the wheel;
5 a plate connected to the side brackets; and
6 a fastening arrangement adapted and constructed to fasten the plate to the
7 packaging component.

- 1 3. A caster shipping assembly in accordance with claim 2, wherein
2 the fastening arrangement includes at least one aperture in the plate of the securing
3 bracket.

- 1 4. A caster shipping assembly in accordance with claim 3, wherein
2 the fastening arrangement includes at least one fastener constructed to fit through the
3 at least one aperture in the plate of the securing bracket.

- 1 5. A caster shipping assembly in accordance with claim 4, wherein
2 the at least one fastener comprises at least one threaded fastener.

- 1 6. A caster shipping assembly in accordance with claim 4, wherein
2 the at least one aperture comprises a plurality of apertures.

1 7. A caster shipping assembly in accordance with claim 1, further
2 comprising a pivoting connection between the securing bracket and the wheel.

1 8. A caster shipping assembly in accordance with claim 7, wherein
2 the pivoting connection comprises a connection between the securing bracket and the
3 axle of the wheel.

1 9. A caster securing bracket for use with a caster including a
2 wheel having a radius and a centrally mounted axle, the securing bracket comprising
3 the following:
4 a pair of side supports secured to opposing sides of the axle, each of the side
5 brackets having a length greater than the radius of the caster wheel;
6 and
7 a plate connected to the side brackets, the plate including a fastening
8 arrangement adapted and constructed to be fastened to a packaging
9 component to suspend the wheel above the packaging component
10 during shipping.

1 10. A securing bracket in accordance with claim 9, wherein the side
2 supports are fabricated to have a generally triangular shape.

1 11. A securing bracket in accordance with claim 10, wherein the
2 plate is generally rectangular, with opposite sides of the rectangle being attached to
3 respective sides of the triangular side supports.

1 12. A securing bracket in accordance with claim 9, wherein the
2 fastening arrangement includes at least one aperture in the plate adapted to receive at
3 least one fastener.

1 13. A securing bracket in accordance with claim 12, wherein the at
2 least one aperture in the plate is adapted and constructed to receive at least one
3 threaded fastener.

1 14. A securing bracket in accordance with claim 9, wherein the side
2 supports and plate are fabricated from a rigid material.

1 15. A securing bracket in accordance with claim 14, wherein the
2 side supports and plate are fabricated from metal.

1 16. A securing bracket in accordance with claim 9, wherein the side
2 supports and plate are integrally formed.

1 17. A method of securing a caster to a packaging component during
2 shipping, the caster including a wheel having a radius and a centrally mounted axle,
3 the method comprising the following steps:
4 connecting a securing bracket to the axle of the wheel, the securing bracket
5 having a length greater than the radius of the wheel;
6 moving the bracket to a shipping position in which the wheel is suspended
7 above the packaging component; and
8 fastening the bracket to the packaging component.

1 18. A method in accordance with claim 17, wherein the step of
2 moving the bracket to a shipping position comprises pivoting the bracket pivoting the
3 bracket to a shipping position.

1 19. A method in accordance with claim 17, wherein the step of
2 fastening the bracket to the packaging component comprises fastening the bracket to
3 the packaging component with a threaded fastener.

1 20. A method in accordance with claim 19, wherein the step of
2 fastening the bracket to the packaging component with a threaded fastener comprises
3 bolting the bracket to the packaging component.